



Effective Educational Practices that Build Institutional Strength

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Current Context:

Compelling data:

1. College graduation rate hovers around 50%
2. Not an option to admit only the most talented and well-prepared
3. Full-time students spend an average of 13 hrs per week studying (Hrs. recommended by faculty = 20-25)
4. 24% faculty report courses require memorization, while 64% students felt this was the case
5. Press to improve student success and provide evidence of student learning

Challenges:

Assertion: Too few students are getting the most out of their college education.

- How do we get more students to take greater advantage of educational opportunities?
- To what extent are you willing to increase your investment in student success initiatives?
- In what ways does your strategic plan, budget, assessment programs reflect a commitment to student success?
- How do you know that what you're doing enhances student success?

Overview

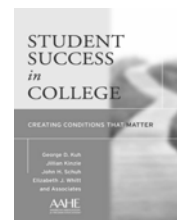
- Highlights from Project DEEP
- Six Conditions for Educational Effectiveness
- Building Institutional Strength: Sweet Briar Story
- The Inventory for Student Engagement and Success
- Next Steps

Inquiring Minds Want to Know:

- What do strong-performing colleges and universities do to promote student success?
- What campus features -- policies, programs, and practices -- are related to higher-than-predicted graduation rates and student engagement?

Project DEEP

To discover, document, and describe what high performing institutions do to achieve their notable level of effectiveness.



DEEP Selection Criteria

Controlling for student and institutional characteristics (i.e., selectivity, diversity, institutional type), DEEP schools have:

- Higher-than-predicted graduation rates
- Higher-than-predicted NSSE scores

Region and institutional type, special mission



What *Really* Matters in College: Student Engagement



Because individual effort and involvement are the critical determinants of impact, institutions should focus on the ways they can shape their academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage *student engagement*.

Pascarella & Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, 2005, p. 602

The Student Engagement Trinity

- What students do -- time and energy devoted to educationally purposeful activities
- What institutions do -- using effective educational practices to induce students to do the right things
- Educationally effective institutions channel student energy toward the right activities

Good Practices in Undergraduate Education

(Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)

- ✓ Student-faculty contact
- ✓ Active learning
- ✓ Prompt feedback
- ✓ Time on task
- ✓ High expectations
- ✓ Experiences with diversity
- ✓ Cooperation among students



National Survey of Student Engagement
(pronounced "nessie")

Community College Survey of Student Engagement
(pronounced "sessie")



College student surveys that assess the extent to which students engage in educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development

DEEP Research Approach

- Case study method
 - Team of 24 researchers review institutional documents and conduct multiple-day site visits, 2 visits to each school
 - Observe individuals, classes, events, offices, public space
 - Individual and group meetings
 - 2,700+ people, 60 classes, 30 events,
 - Discover and describe effective practices and programs, campus culture
 - Interim report, debriefings, final report

Project DEEP*

Doctoral Extensives

University of Kansas
University of Michigan

Doctoral Intensives

George Mason University
Miami University (Ohio)
University of Texas El Paso

Master's Granting

Fayetteville State University
Gonzaga University
Longwood University

Liberal Arts

California State, Monterey Bay
Macalester College
Sweet Briar College
The Evergreen State College
Sewanee: University of the South
Ursinus College
Wabash College
Wheaton College (MA)
Wofford College

Baccalaureate General

Alverno College
University of Maine at Farmington
Winston-Salem State University

* Selection criteria: Higher-than-predicted graduation rates; Higher-than-predicted student engagement scores

Points to Ponder

- How might you use an “effective educational practice” or “conditions for student success” framework to build institutional strength?
- Which of these practices are transferable and adaptable to your institution?
- What are the implications of DEEP for student affairs, faculty etc?

One Framework to Consider: Effective Educational Practices

Academic Challenge

Learning-intensive practices

Sweet Briar requires every student to take from 3 writing-intensive courses. Most DEEP schools have strong writing support centers (peer tutors, writing groups) to emphasize and support the importance of good writing.

Active and Collaborative Learning

Ample applied learning opportunities

CSUMB requires all students to complete a lower and upper-level service learning experience

Student-Faculty Interaction

Early exposure to faculty

Winston Salem State, discipline-specific orientation activities immediately immerse students in the culture of facilitate early bonds with faculty. These faculty members eventually become one of the most influential adults in students' academic lives, making sure they are successful in all aspects of college life.

Enriching Educational Experiences

Cross-cultural experiences

Alverno and George Mason intentionally craft shorter study abroad experiences that meet the needs of their large non-traditional population. Similarly, Kansas and UMF arrange class-based trips that are more accessible to their first generation students

Supportive Campus Environment

Intentionally orchestrated, educationally purposeful peer interaction

Longwood values “students helping other students” as a catalyst to promote student achievement and learning and “to wake up students’ volunteerism and academic pursuits.” Peer mentors in the Longwood Seminar, residence halls leadership roles, and the strong co-curricular program makes this possible.

Framework from DEEP: Conditions to Promote Student Success

1. “Living” Mission and “Lived” Educational Philosophy
2. Unshakeable Focus on Student Learning
3. Environments Adapted for Educational Enrichment
4. Clearly Marked Pathways to Student Success
5. Improvement-Oriented Ethos
6. Shared Responsibility for Educational Quality

Worth Noting

- *Many roads to an engaging institution*
 - ❖ No one best model
 - ❖ Different combinations of complementary, interactive, synergistic conditions
 - ❖ *Anything worth doing is worth doing well at scale*

Lessons from Project DEEP

1. “Living” Mission and “Lived” Educational Philosophy
 - ❖ Some deviate little from original mission; others have new missions and expanded educational purposes.
 - ❖ Missions, values, and aspirations are transparent and understandable.
 - ❖ Sustained widespread understanding and endorsement of educational purposes.

Mission and Culture

- Macalester College students, faculty and staff understand and articulate the College’s core values of academic excellence, service, multiculturalism and internationalism. These values are enacted in the curriculum and co-curriculum.

Lessons

1. “Living” Mission and “Lived” Educational Philosophy
 - ❖ Operating philosophy focuses on students and their success.
 - ❖ Complementary policies and practices tailored to the school’s mission and students’ needs and abilities.
 - ❖ Institutional values really *do* guide many important policy and operation decisions.

Living the Mission

➤ “Sea change” at KU to emphasize undergraduate instruction

1. Experienced instructors teach lower division and introductory courses
2. Faculty members from each academic unit serve as “Faculty Ambassadors” to the Center for Teaching Excellence
3. Course enrollments kept low in many undergraduate courses; 80% have 30 or fewer students; 93% 50 or fewer students.

Lessons

2. *Unshakeable Focus on Student Learning*

- ❖ Student learning and personal development are high priorities.
- ❖ Bent toward engaging pedagogies
- ❖ “Cool passion” for talent development (students, faculty, staff)
- ❖ Making time for students
- ❖ Accommodate students’ preferred learning styles

Build on student strengths

University of Texas at El Paso uses learning communities and course-based service learning and volunteerism to actively engage its mostly commuter, first-generation students.

Lessons

Unshakeable Focus on Student Learning

- ❖ Recruit and reward faculty and staff committed to pedagogical experimentation
- ❖ Faculty and administrators challenge students with high standards
- ❖ “Work with the students we have,” in contrast to focusing only on the best and the brightest

Reinforce academic engagement outside the classroom

Fayetteville State academic departments sponsor academic clubs with faculty advisors. College of Education sponsors 10 student organizations that connect classroom content with co-curricular experiences. Some organizations provide tutoring services.

Lessons

3. *Environments Adapted for Educational Advantage*

- ❖ DEEP schools make wherever they are “a good place for a college!”
- ❖ Connected to the local community in mutually beneficial, educationally purposeful ways.
- ❖ “Place conscious.”

Linking campus and community

George Mason's Century Club: Business, professional, and government organizations promote partnerships between the University and the metro area business community. Members volunteer to work with faculty and students in job and internship fairs, resume and interviewing workshops, and networking opportunities.

Lessons

3. Environments Adapted for Educational Enrichment

- ❖ Buildings, classrooms, and other physical structures are adapted to "human scale."
- ❖ Psychological size fosters engagement with peers, faculty and staff.

Physical space promotes collaboration

Wofford's Milliken Building -- its science center -- was intentionally designed with plenty of "fishbowls" and other areas for group work space. "Homework lounges," adjacent to faculty offices, also promote interactive learning.

U of Kansas Digital Environments: Technology enriched learning

Faculty make large lecture classes engaging via PowerPoint, Blackboard software, and other technology including slides and videos, and "interactive lecturing," which incorporates various opportunities for students to participate.

Lessons

4. Clearly Marked Pathways to Student Success

- ❖ Make plain to students the resources and services available to help them succeed.
- ❖ Some guideposts tied directly to the academic program; others related to student and campus culture.
- ❖ Institutional publications accurately describe what students experience.

Socialization to academic expectations

Wheaton new students read a common book and essays by faculty that respond to the reading. Assigned readings, faculty responses, and the website combine to introduce incoming students to preferred ways to grapple with intellectual issues.

Intentional acculturation

Miami's First Year Experience (FYE) brings coherence to the first-year by linking: (1) Miami Plan Foundation courses taught by full-time faculty; (2) optional first-year seminars; (3) community living options that emphasize leadership and service; and (4) cultural, intellectual, and arts events.

Intentional acculturation

Rituals and traditions connect students to each other and the institution

KU's "Traditions Night." 3,000 + students gather in the football stadium to rehearse the Rock Chalk Chant, listen to stories about the Jayhawk, learn the "I'm a Jayhawk" school song, and hear stories intended to instill students' commitment to graduation



Lessons

4. *Clearly Marked Pathways to Student Success*

- ❖ Efforts tailored to student needs.
- ❖ Mutually reinforcing student expectations and behavior, institutional expectations, and institutional reward systems.
- ❖ Redundant early warning systems and safety nets

Redundant early warning systems: "Tag Teaming"

- Wheaton first-year student advising team includes faculty, student preceptors, librarians and administrative staff.
- At Ursinus, Miami, and Wheaton representatives from both academic affairs and student affairs serve as academic advisors.

Lessons

5. *Improvement oriented ethos*

- ❖ Positive restlessness
- ❖ Self-correcting orientation
- ❖ Continually question, "are we performing as well as we can?"
- ❖ Confident, responsive, but never quite satisfied...
- ❖ "We know who we are and what we aspire to."

Self-correcting orientation

- FSU Chancellor concerned about first-to-second year retention rates
- Chancellor launches Freshman Year Initiative
- Vision of holistic student development engaged all FSU community members
- Expanded facilities to support students

Lessons

6. *Shared responsibility for educational quality*

- ❖ Leaders articulate and use core operating principles in decision making
- ❖ Supportive educators are everywhere
- ❖ Student and academic affairs collaboration
- ❖ Student ownership
- ❖ A caring, supportive community

Supportive educators and educational experiences

University of Maine at Farmington's (UMF) Student Work Initiative employs students in meaningful work in student services, laboratories, and field-research*. Such experiences provide opportunities to apply what they are learning to practical, real-life situations.

**more than 50% of UMF students work on campus*

The Power of One

Every DEEP school has people who add a special dimension to the student experience. They make people around them better as they routinely energize all with whom they interact – students, faculty, staff and others.

"Miss Rita" at Wofford College

Building Institutional Strength: Sweet Briar Story

➤ The Whole is Greater than the Sum of the Parts

Student success is enhanced when an institution provides many complementary policies and practices to support students academically and socially

Effective Educational Practices That Build Institutional Strength

Sweet Briar College
Responds to the Data



A Confluence of Data

- NSSE and SACS
- Project DEEP
- Self-Study: Shape of the Future
 - George Dehne and Associates
- New Admissions Campaign
 - Richard Harrison Bailey: The Agency
 - Circles of Influence

All DEEP Schools

- “Educating students is everyone's business. Student affairs, campus librarians, support staff, and faculty work together to make sure no student falls through the cracks.” (p. 251)

DEEP and Sweet Briar

- “...A salient founding mission and strong campus culture are touchstones for students success.” (p. 21)
- “The small size of the full-time student body and human-scale campus make it easy for students and faculty members to connect outside of class to discuss ideas presented in class, graduate school options, and other matters.” (p. 81)

- “The close-knit campus culture almost compels students, faculty members, and staff to weave their personal lives into the academic and intellectual fabric of the college.” (p. 45)
- “...peers and faculty members routinely go out of their way to point students in the right direction.” (p. 110)
- “Enrollment challenges...prompting them to consider ways to improve the quality of the undergraduate experience.” (p. 276)

Advising Teams

- DEEP mentions tag-team advising at some studied schools, as a corporate safety net.
- Sweet Briar's approach is student-centered and is intentionally conceived to help each student to take on the responsibility of managing her advising process.

Advising Teams

- Students had been consulting with people across campus for decades.
- The various sources of “advice” were often unaware of each other's input to a given student.
- Some important expertise was being overlooked.
- A new system needed to not add work to the process.

Each Student Manages Her Team

- Initial Academic Advisor
- Major Advisory (when declared)
- Other Disciplinary Faculty
 - Minors, Pre-Med, Pre-Vet, Pre-Law, Interests
- Professional Staff
 - Career Services, Study Abroad
- Campus Experts
 - Faculty and staff with particular interests or experience
 - Alumnae

Web-based Advising Resources in Place

Developed by John Coleman
Former Assistant Registrar
Sweet Briar College

Web-based, but personal advising

Developed by Alix Ingber
Director of Academic Advising
Sweet Briar College

Scenario One

- A student is interested in event planning
 - Business major advisor
 - Campus job in catering, supervisor on team
 - Internship with Alumnae Office, supervisor on team
 - Office manager for College Relations
 - Adds alumna to team who coordinates events for the Kennedy Center

Scenario Two

- A student wishes to study classics at the Centro in Rome and do an internship while she is there.
 - Classics Professor
 - Italian Professor
 - International Studies Director
 - Career Services Director
 - Alumna who attend the Centro in 2001

Benefits

- Students have better access to good information.
- Advisors know what students have been told.
- Students are responsible for using the resources available to them.
- There is potential for improved retention.

Sweet Briar College

Creating Student Success Oriented Cultures is not without Challenges....

- **Must hire the "right" educators**
- **Balancing demands for teaching and research**
- **Recognizing faculty for experimenting and employing engaging pedagogy**
- **Overworked faculty**

What steps might you take to improve conditions to enhance student success?

Constant self-evaluation keeps an institution vital...

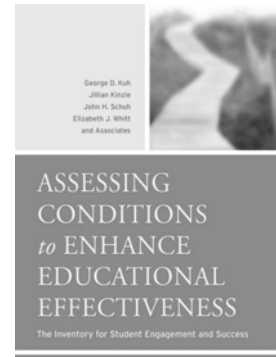


Most college campuses are awash in data but thirsty for information (Seymour, 1995, p. 80).

Taking Stock of What Matters to Student Success

"The Inventory for Student Engagement and Success"

Jossey-Bass
October, 2005



Taking Stock: Guiding Principles

1. Context is everything
2. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts
3. Evidence is essential; more is better
4. Test beliefs with data
5. Cast a wide net
6. Use outsiders to ask hard questions
7. Acknowledge the negative; accentuate the positive
8. Prepare to stay the course

How might you use ISES?

- Campus self-study: Assemble a team to assess the conditions for student success institution-wide
- Focused study: Identify a NSSE cluster or DEEP condition in which your campus is under-performing and conduct a focused ISES probe around this topic
- Unit or function study: Tailor study around a topic such as admissions and student recruitment, curriculum review, student affairs, campus planning and faculty development

Discussion Questions

- Which of these practices are transferable and adaptable to your institution?
- Which practices are bounded by institutional size or mission?
- What current policies and practices promote high levels of student engagement?
- What are 1-2 steps you can take to cultivate educational practices and campus conditions that promote student success?

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